

**Policy 304 Regional Storm Water Management**

The Fairfax County Park Authority should limit the placement of County regional storm water management facilities\* on park lands either titled or leased to the Park Authority to locations meeting the following criteria:

Pursuant to the County Comprehensive Plan, Parks and Recreation policy 3c, the Park Authority shall prohibit the location of major public facilities, including transportation, through or on public parklands unless: a) the Park Authority determines that the proposed location is compatible with its use of parkland, or b) a determination has been made that there is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of parkland and that all possible planning to minimize harm is included in the proposed project. The Park Authority shall require a plan amendment where the location of such facilities would substantially interfere with the provision of open space and/or recreational facilities or would have a significant adverse impact on ecological and heritage resources.

Where it has been determined that there is no feasible and prudent alternative OR where the co-location and placement of the facility would enhance the water quality of the stream flowing through the park, and subsequently the Chesapeake Bay, through reduction of non-point source pollution, the following criteria shall be applied to proposed storm water management facilities on parklands:

1. The site is identified in the Regional Storm Water Management Plan approved by the Board of Supervisors in 1989 (or on subsequent plans approved with Fairfax County Park Authority involvement);
2. The proposed facility would not present a potential legal exposure or liability to the Park Authority;
3. The proposed location would not adversely affect (e.g., displace, damage or destroy) significant natural or cultural resources;
4. The proposed storm water management facility is designed to mitigate impact on the character of the park; and construction plans and easements have been reviewed by Park Authority staff or consultant for compatibility with stream valley hydrology;
5. The proposed location would not displace existing or planned park facilities;
6. The proposed facility location would not adversely affect park operations and maintenance;
7. Adjoining property owners have been duly notified of the proposed storm water management facility location;

***Policy 304 Regional Storm Water Management (continuation)***

8. The County assumes responsibility for the maintenance of the storm water management facility, easements, structures, associated access road, as well as responsibility for the monitoring and the removal of toxic and non-toxic materials, if necessary, to maintain the environmental integrity of the park;
9. The County Department of Public Works assumes responsibility for the rehabilitation of downstream damages to the Park Authority or other land resulting from the failure of a storm water management facility under their maintenance; and
10. The Park Authority is adequately compensated for the preliminary and final review of plans, including the necessary staff and or/consultant time, field survey, legal work, permits and other relevant expenses in addition to the fair market value of parkland used for regional storm water management facilities, to the extent that such facility does not benefit Park Authority management objectives.

\* In January 1989, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors approved a consultant's study and concept plan for the placement of 134 regional storm water management (SWM) facilities in seven watersheds, primarily in the developing western quadrant of the county as an alternative to the placement of more numerous "on site" detention ponds. The purpose of the program was to provide a "cost efficient system for storm water management" through the design, construction and maintenance of fewer facilities to manage a given watershed. Staff from the Park Authority participated in the interagency work group that directed and reviewed the study. Of those facilities proposed, 35 locations were situated, either wholly or partially within parks and stream valley land owned by the Fairfax County Park Authority. Presented with the findings and recommendations of the report, the Park Authority board accepted the report without actually approving it.

Regional SMW facilities are more effective than on-site detention ponds for the collection of run-off, dissipation of storm water velocity, settling of silt and pollutants, and reduction of downstream erosion and sedimentation; they are most effective when used in combination with on-site basins. Nevertheless, concerns remain about the effects of such facilities on the parkland and the disruption of the stream valleys which adjacent homeowners may have expected to remain undeveloped. This policy is intended to address these concerns in a manner consistent with the Park Authority's responsibilities for stewardship of the public lands titled or leased to it.

---

*Revised and adopted October 28, 1998*